Here. (#RudeTrip)

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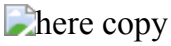
Here. (#RudeTrip)

by TigerPrawn

Summary

Grigg returned to the US and Nigel can’t live without him. Grigg isn’t fairing much better and needs his Alpha. Nigel is going to travel from Romania and all over California in search of his omega no matter what.



Notes

My slightly late to the party entry for #RudeTrip

not beta'd

Chapter 1

Grigg woke with a start, a sheen of sweat on his skin. He was a couple of weeks from his heat and knew this wasn't it coming early - that had happened once as a teenager and he knew roughly what to expect. Nope, this was caused by the dream he had just had. A dream about being in heat, and for the first time, experiencing it with an alpha.

This had left him sweaty, frustrated and achingly hard. For the first time in a long while, he was anxious about his heat. It wasn't something he particularly looked forward to, but he didn't usually dread it like this. The thought of going into heat now that he was bonded, without the alpha around, it was sort of devastating. It wasn't exactly what all omegas dreamed of.

It was his own fault of course. After the alpha, Nigel, had cornered him at his presentation, they had gone back to his room. They should have talked, worked out what they were doing next, but instead they had sex. Lots of sex. Lots of very very good sex. And then they woke in the morning and Grigg realised his flight was in a few hours. Without saying anything, he'd waited for the alpha to take a shower, quickly packed and left. He had really fucked up, he knew that. But it appeared to be his turn to freak out. And now… he was in a different country with absolutely no idea how to even get in touch with the alpha he was bonded to.

Grigg had occasionally, casually, considered going on suppressants - who hadn't these days? But usually he was comfortable, he had enough money to take the time off and to hole up with toys and dvds and feel safe and secure, and away from any alpha's that might come sniffing around. Sometimes he even spent it at his sister's beach house. Kat was the only sibling that wasn't a beta, as an alpha she didn't always get it from his point of view… but she knew from an alpha point of view and so was more than happy to help her little brother lock himself away every few months.

But now, for the first time, he was really considering going on suppressants. The thought of going through heat in a couple of weeks was hideous, even before the dream he'd had. He'd been an idiot to leave Romania so suddenly, but really - what was he meant to do? It was like the start of some ridiculous romcom, or possibly even a horror movie - accidentally bond with a random stranger. A random stranger who looked at him with adoration and guessed his favourite colour after only a few hours together.

So maybe he overreacted, which was going to be a bit of a problem as he could already feel the weird feeling of emptiness pooling within him. Usually he was a happy kind of guy, took life in his stride. But since landing back in California less than a week ago, he had felt more and more down. And it was only going to get worse. This was why people didn't bond lightly - they were attached now, forever. And being apart like this, so early in the bond was terrible. He looked it up online and knew he could look forward to more sleepless nights, the shakes, loss of appetite, problems concentrating, fluey symptoms. In some cases, symptoms severe as to require hospitlisation... or worse.

It was no good, wouldn't make any difference at all the situation, but Grigg really wished he had never stepped into that bar.

*

Nigel punched the man in the face again for good measure. And then once more before letting him drop to the floor.

"Fuck!" Darko near shouted into his ear as he came up behind him. "Hard to get money out of fucking dead people Nigel!"

"He's not dead." Nigel stepped back from the slumped figure in the alleyway to the side of Darko's club, took a cigarette from his shirt pocket and lit it. He took a long draw on it and let it out before turning to Darko.

"Not yet." Darko said, eyeing the guy on the floor. "Not for want of trying by the looks of it."

"He was leaving without paying one of the girl's her due, you prefer I let him leave?"

"I prefer you get the money-"

Darko was cut off by Nigel tossing him the man's wallet. "I already considered this."

He started back into the club and Darko followed a moment later.

"What the fuck has you so wound up? Is it that girl? She playing hard to get?"

"Girl?" Nigel's thoughts went to the very much not a girl omega he had bonded almost a week earlier.

"The musician, with the cello. The one you wouldn't fucking stop going on about tracking down." Darko had stopped walking and was frowning at him.

"Oh." Was all Nigel could reply as he thought about the beta girl who had ceased to exist in his mind since meeting Grigg Harris. "No, not her."

"Someone though…." Darko encouraged. "You weren't around much for a few days, figured you'd found her and took her to bed." Nigel couldn't return the grin.

"Ha! If only." he tried to sound amused but knew his tone was off, and evidently Darko did too.

"Nigel, what's going on with you?"

"Nothing… I… may need some time off. Do you have any contacts in the States? California?"

"Ana Cardei, you know her - the alpha that used to run the Card Club, she is there - has a place in Los Angeles. Another club… why?"

“I need a break, a change. I need to um… I…” He hadn’t wanted to tell anyone, not even his closest friend. He wasn’t exactly ashamed, he just felt fucking stupid. Not only had he managed to get himself into this ridiculous situation, but he had managed to essentially lose his fucking omega. Now that was something he was embarrassed about. “There’s someone I need to find there… a friend…”

Darko gave him a sidelong look, clearly knowing when Nigel was avoiding telling him something but also knowing enough not to push him. His curiosity was clear though and to avoid any future pestering, Nigel added “An omega I’m interested in.”

Darko’s face broke into a grin and he slapped Nigel on the back and started to walk to the club again “About time my friend!”

*

Grigg was surprised to hear from Jocelyn, a previous hook up, but relieved when it wasn’t any sort of pursuit of him. She seemed happy to be single and he was fully ready to drop into conversation that he was now bonded, if he had to. As much as he was unsure about doing so, because… yeah what was happening with that? Grigg pushed to the back of his mind again.

Turns out the alpha called to ask him to be in a book club, as they needed an extra to make up the numbers. It seemed like a nice idea, he hadn’t moved to the area all that long ago so it would be good way to make friends outside of work. He’d never read Jane Austen before but it seemed interesting. It’s the sort of thing Kat had probably read, he was much more into sci-fi. He found for a moment his mind wandering… what kind of books was Nigel into?

He pushed thoughts of the alpha down. Best to ignore him, and the increasing symptoms of their separation. He couldn’t remember that last proper meal he’d had and he constantly felt under the weather. It would pass, he kept telling himself. If he ignored the fact that he was getting obviously sicker by the day. Sticking his head in the sand wasn't something he normally practiced but some stuff was just too big to deal with. He'd deal with it all another day.

*

Nigel didn’t really remember Ana that well but she seemed to remember him, thankfully in a good way, and told him he definitely had a job with her if he wanted it. She was apparently in need of intimidating muscle at the club, people she could trust not to touch the girls. Especially as she had a couple of omegas working for her! America! Such a place!

It would make a nice change too, to being Darko’s right hand guy. He often missed the simplicity of being a bouncer. He was all up for it if it meant getting away from the more stressful and dangerous parts of the job for a while. Violence, as much as he enjoyed it, was draining - or rather the risk of getting caught was.

The flight from Bucharest to Los Angeles had been a hellish mix of cramped leg space and noisy children. And every moment of it, sleeping or awake, he'd thought of Grigg Harris. He thought about finding him, scooping up into his arms and burying his face in his neck. Taking in deep steady breaths of the scent that was now ingrained in him. So much so that every day

without it felt like a day closer to death. In his dreams he saw the omega smiling up at him from a large soft bed of bright yellow pillows and bedspread.

When he was jolted awake by some shitty teenager defiantly slamming their tray into the upright position at the back of his chair, his vision of yellow disappeared. He was left with a feeling, an overwhelming realisation that ate at him - he needed to find the omega no matter how many shitty planes or trains or buses or fucking bicycles he had to use.

He knew Grigg was somewhere in California, he remembered from the introduction he was given at the conference that he worked for an IT company. Not a lot to go on, but for some reason he had faith he would find the man. Call it instinct. Maybe it was the bond? But Nigel knew that Grigg needed him and so finding him was inevitable. Maybe he had watched too many movies. Maybe his secret love of romcoms was colouring his thoughts. But he had to believe it was that simple, he needed it to be that simple. He needed Grigg.

After three days in California having not found him, Nigel realised he perhaps had to take a better approach than just assuming he'd run into the guy - that the bond would take care of the situation like in Four Weddings and a Funeral.

Ana had a computer in her office she was happy to let him use, so he started googling ‘Grigg Harris, California’. He was surprised and dismayed that this wonder of modern technology was not helping him in the least. He recalled that Grigg mentioned only recently moving, though where to and from beyond California he wasn't sure was mentioned, or else he'd forgotten. What an asshole he was. Perhaps Grigg would be better off if he didn't find him. In all likelihood the omega had rightfully come to his senses and gone straight to an American doctor to try and have the bond broken. He wondered if any day the feeling of loneliness and abandon would lift and they would be free of each other. The thought made him ache to his bones.

*

Grigg threw up for the second time that morning. The first time he had been cycling to work and just put it down to the heat and exertion. But the second time, a little before lunch, was definitely not as easily dismissed.

He felt terrible. He’d barely made it through the first Jane Austen Book Club meeting the night before, but there were a couple of other omegas there and they gave him kind looks, clearly knowing his heat would soon descend. Thankfully the meetings would be spread enough apart to give them time to read the books. There was no way he’d be in a fit state within a week or two. This was like something he’d never experienced before and he couldn’t believe bonded omegas went through this. Though he knew they probably didn't - it was the separation that was the issue.

He made it through lunch, not that he ate anything, but was sick again in the mid-afternoon, which got him sent to the first aider who appeared to be extremely concerned and told him he should go see his doctor. Apparently Bond-Separation so close to, or even during heat, could have severe medical side-effects. Not that Grigg didn’t already know that from high school biology class, he was just doing a great job of trying to forget about it all and ignore there

was clearly a problem. Because it didn't matter now, he had no idea how to contact Nigel. He knew so little about the man that perhaps it was for the best.

The first aider made him promise to see his doctor, and he would - because there were only a couple of options here really. He needed an alpha to see him through his heat, or he needed hormone therapy to break the bond and that was something only his doctor could help with.

*

Nigel needed a fucking cigarette. Who knew California was so large that it took this many hours to travel from one town to another? He'd been on the Greyhound bus for over three hours, which was a long enough time to go without a smoke without the guy sat next to him stinking to high heaven. In fact, a lot of stuff was smelly these days, some good some bad. It was like he had a greater sense of smell all of a sudden. He couldn't help but think how useful that would be once he was close enough to Grigg to scent him. But for now it meant that the guy who was drowning in his own body odour was taking Nigel with him.

He looked at his watch, hoping for time to speed up. And yet, he couldn't regret the journey. He'd sit on a bus full of boiled cabbage and used diapers if it brought him closer to Grigg, and this hopefully would.

He hoped he was on the right track now. Back in Los Angeles he'd gone into a bookshop, just one of those old ones that looked dusty but weren't. He had no reason to go in there other than having a sudden and overwhelming sense that Grigg might be found in such a place. He had stood in the science fiction section sniffing the air - just musty old books. No Grigg. Even so it made his mind race - where could he find Grigg, from what little he knew about him? Where had he been, where would he go?

Well, he knew where he had been. Nigel called the hotel Grigg had stayed at and managed to get the details of the company that organised the conference. They had in turn told him the details of the company Grigg worked for. He called their reception but it went dead when they tried to put him through to Grigg so he called back, got the address and packed his duffel.

He'd go in person, find Grigg at his work and never let him go again. As soon as this damn bus got there.

*

Grigg sat in his doctor's office trying to take in what the beta was saying. The expensive, controversial and potentially dangerous, hormone therapy required to break a bond was not an option. He'd left it too late. He knew it really. Had known it for a while. He had denied it to himself so many times, but the truth was there - he hadn't wanted to break the bond even when the sickness had started to set in. He hated it, hated that side of his omega nature, but there was a part of him that would rather be this sick or worse, than break the bond.

He looked down at the leaflet the doctor had passed to him.

“-they’re very discreet. It won’t be a long term solution, but to get you through your heat. And then we can investigate other medical options. Going on suppressants might help, but again that may only be a short term relief. Bonds are for life… so…” The doctor seemed sympathetic and concerned.

Grigg turned the leaflet over in his hands. If anyone had asked a month ago, he would never have suspected he’d be bonded, separated from his mate, and holding a leaflet for a knotting service that hired out alpha studs for omegas in heat. He’d never considered an escort service before and now that he was bonded the thought made him sick. He didn’t want another alpha. He didn’t want another alpha’s knot. He wanted Nigel.

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“What do you mean he doesn’t work here? I called…” Nigel was barely containing the rage he wanted to unleash on the receptionist, who looked at him sternly.

“Mr Harris recently moved to another company, the receptionist you spoke to did not have the updated contact information. I’m sorry sir but we can’t help.”

“But… you sent him to a conference, how can he not work here?”

“He was not representing the company at the conference, he just happened to be working here when he was asked to speak at it.” She talked about him easily and though it seemed like a big company he wondered if they knew each other personally. His eye twitched.

She didn’t catch the tick as she had been looking at his brow and Nigel knew sweat was beading there. It had started at the thought of seeing Grigg again. Been compounded by the scent of him. It lingered so faintly, almost a whisper in the air, that Nigel realised he’d no doubt have missed had his sense of smell been usual rather than the recent enhanced. He was on edge but there was no point taking it out on anyone, so he breathed out a sigh instead.

“Can you tell me which company he is at now?”

“I can’t, I’m sorry. We aren’t allowed to give out information like that.” Her voice softened and she sounded apologetic. She seemed thoughtful for a moment and he knew she was studying his face and taking in the desperation there. “But… say, you know, Sacramento is a nice place to go while you’re travelling. I’d definitely recommend it whilst you’re in California… travelling.” She smiled.

*

Grigg doubled over with pain. His abdomen felt like it was being gripped from the inside and painfully squeezed. It was accompanied by a burn and ache throughout his lower body. The last two days he hadn’t even made it to work, instead barely moving from his sofa, where he curled - glaring at the leaflet on his coffee table.

He whined. Not from the pain but another fresh wave of mental anguish at being apart from Nigel. He didn’t want to call the service.

He wanted Nigel. A thought that was getting more difficult to push down. It was no good, he would be in heat within days and he was already barely able to move from the sofa. He needed to do something - find an alpha to help him, he knew whether he liked it or not. He just needed to get through the next week and then worry about the long term.

He considered the leaflet for less than a second, before dismissing the idea of calling them. He didn't want some random stranger send to his house to fuck him. He, at the least wanted to be able to chose the alpha, even considered calling Jocelyn, but was compos mentis enough to know that he didn't want things to get awkward with her now that they were in a book club together. Instead he poured a double dose of painkillers from the bottle on the table, swigged them back with some water and took a deep breath. Twenty minutes later and the drugs had taken the edge off for now. Grigg took a moment and then stood, grabbed his keys and headed out the door.

*

Nigel had suffered another Greyhound. This time permeated with the sticky and sour smell of the children sat all around him. Weirdly, he found something appealing about the smell, something that had an image of a pregnant and smiling Grigg spring forth in his mind. The thought made him ache in several places.

He needed to find his omega!

He managed to sleep on the coach, which meant that he was wide awake when they pulled into Sacramento close to 11pm. It was dark and the air was warm and smelled like blossom. The smell was yellow, it was California, it was Grigg. Nigel felt a pang in his chest. His omega had to be in this city.

He found a cab rank by the bus terminal and threw his duffel in the back before following it.

"Where to bud?"

"I don't know, somewhere halfway clean and tidy - a motel?" Nigel blinked, trying to clear the blur of sleep.

"Sure." The driver put the car into drive and started to pull from the curb.

"Wait, um, you know somewhere with a good bookshop? Like an old bookshop, big, lots of science fiction?" Nigel described the image he kept seeing in his head of Grigg, yellow t-shirt, comic book in hand.

"I guess… there's a really big old bookshop up in Vista Mar I think… It'll be closed now though buddy." The driver replied thoughtfully, moving the car at no more than a crawl.

"Yeah, yeah ok. Somewhere near there then?" Nigel replied with Grigg smiling in his mind.

"Sure thing, I know a good place up there."

*

Grigg got a bottle of water from the bar and took it all down in long draws.

“Damn! Pretty mouth like that around my cock would make my night!” He could smell the alpha that had appeared next to him at the bar and watched him empty the bottle. Grigg felt his heart drop. An alpha, he needed an alpha to help him. His heat was close and he felt like he was dying, maybe he was, his head hurt so much. But the smell, the scent of the alpha next to him made him feel sick to his stomach. He wanted to cry.

When he didn’t say anything, just looked forlorn into the middle distance, the alpha frowned at him.

“Something wrong with you? You ok?” He asked, a hard edge to his voice rather than a tone of concern.

“I need my alpha…” Grigg said the words without thought.

“I can be your alpha baby, that’s what I’m saying. You want an alpha for the night, I’m your guy!” Grigg couldn’t quite focus on the alpha’s over confident grin. He tried to take in the form before him. He was muscular, large, built like a football player. Beautiful dark skin and deep eyes. Grigg smiled thinking how different this might have been only a few short weeks ago. How sweet this man might have smelt, instead of the rancid scent that now filled his nostrils.

Grigg sucked in a breath and steeled himself. He could do this, ignore the scent, ignore the raw feeling of pain and breaking inside his chest. He could go home with this alpha and be fucked senseless until he forgot all about Nigel. Even though he knew it wouldn’t work, the only thing that could separate him from Nigel now was death. Given how sick he felt, the thought made a giggle bubble up and spill from his lips. The alpha took this as a positive response and looped an arm around Grigg’s shoulders.

The sudden close proximity, the putrid scent and shooting pains throughout his abdomen, chest and head, had Grigg reeling. He lurched forward, away from the alpha, and threw up on the floor. He could hear the alpha asking if he was ok and sounding as though this was all too much trouble. He could hear the barman talking loudly, exasperated. Grigg just looked at the floor. It was just water, there was nothing else for him to bring up. He couldn’t remember the last time he had eaten.

*

The taxi let Nigel out in a pretty nice neighbourhood, a lot of new built stuff extending from the older area. They had driven past the bookstore and the cabby had pointed it out, before turning down a couple more streets and dropping Nigel at a nice looking guest house.

He booked in with the friendly beta woman at the all night reception and dropped his bag in his room. He was wide awake now. He felt his blood running hot in his veins and his heart beating faster, maybe because he was closer to Grigg, or maybe just at the thought that he was. Either way, adrenaline was coursing through him and he needed to do something.

He picked up his newly acquired key and headed back out onto the street, tracing the way the taxi had brought him, in search of the bookshop. He could look up the opening hours, find out when to come back the next day so he could look around and… what? Did he really think it would be that easy to find Grigg? They'd just run into each other like that? In the beginning maybe he truly had, but he wasn't a fool. He knew how ridiculous it was to be seeking out a bookstore in the hopes that it was the same one he was seeing in his head - in his imagination, a place that didn't even exist. But he had to do something, no matter how ridiculous, he had to try anything and everything he possibly could.

10am. Opening at 10am according to the information on the door. He turned to walk back but then noticed the other buildings on the street, a few more closed shops, a couple of bars still open. The idea of a drink was suddenly rather appealing.

Nigel crossed the street, up and along to a nice looking bar. It was pretty quiet and he got served almost straight away. The place had a comforting smell, like being home or somewhere familiar and calming, it was nice. It relaxed Nigel in a way he hadn't felt since losing Grigg.

"Quiet place." He commented to the barman as he sank half of his beer, some weak American water beer. They didn't know how to do beer in America, he'd already decided from his time in Los Angeles with Ana.

"Ah, well, it's the weekend. Everyone's in the club upstairs. It's an omega club. Only open Friday and Saturday nights so we get pretty quiet down here those nights… except you know…" He nodded his head towards the end of the room. There were a few comfy sofas, three couples taking them up, necking, kissing, getting to know each other. The ones looking for something special rather than just a fuck for the night. It made Nigel's heart ache a little. He had taken that from Grigg, hadn't he? But he'd given something in return - himself, dedicated, loyal, loving. If Grigg would have him, if he wanted that. Otherwise they'd need to look into that hormone treatment. He'd let Grigg go free if that's what he wanted.

"There's a cover charge if you want to go on up?" The barman asked.

Did he? He didn't want to find just any omega, he wasn't there to pick up. But there was an appeal. It might be nice to prop up the bar in the club and have omegas hit on him, might help him feel better, forget a little for the night. Start again tomorrow.

*

The barman had managed to hustle Grigg into one of the seats by the bar, and put a new water in front of him. He'd asked if there was anyone he could call. The alpha that had been chatting him up was gone. Grigg shook his head.

"I'll just drink this and go, I'll be fine. I can get a cab home." He forced the words out, but from the frown on the barman's face he must have wondered if Grigg were drunk, so choppy they came out. He nodded nonetheless and moved off.

Grigg sat back in the chair and closed his eyes. This wasn't what he had planned. He had wanted it to be easy. Just drop in, find an alpha, get fucked until he felt better. Maybe even

through his heat if he could get them to stick around a few days. He hadn't expected the vomit inducing scents. If anything he was worse, much worse than he had felt before. He wasn't even sure he could do as he had told the barman and make his own way home. At that moment he couldn't even consider getting out of the chair.

The air was oppressive, the rancid smell in the air was thick and swampy. It made it difficult to breath, to think.

Grigg forced himself forward to grab the bottle of water and down it, hoping it would clear the thick mucus feeling of the scents around him. And it seemed to work. Cutting through and letting him breath a little easier again. Relieving the nausea, easing his headache. He wondered what the hell the barman had put in the water. He put it down and took a long deep breath, and his lungs filled with sweet, earthy, and familiar musky scents that comforted him, made him feel better than he had in awhile.

"Ești foarte frumoasă" A deep, rumbling voice, full of love and fondness filled his head.

*

Nigel had paid and gone into the club. He had tried to ignore the scent at first, knowing it was just his mind playing tricks on him. But there, on the stairs he was sure he had scented yellow, old books and sunshine - Grigg.

When he had entered the club itself the scent had hit him hard. Lots of alphas and omegas, a handful of betas - he had been prepared for that, with the sense of smell he'd had recently. Or so he thought. He hadn't been prepared for something so familiar that it brought a lump to his throat, a renewed feeling of lose as it teased him. The air was thick, sweet scents and musk, but cutting through it all - yellow.

He shook his head, trying to free himself from it, even while tears stung at his eyes. He had made a mistake to come here, being in this room with all these omegas and his senses wanted him to think one of them was Grigg. And that wasn't ok, he wasn't ok. He cursed his biology, he didn't want any of them, just Grigg.

He made for the bar, planning on knocking back some hard liquor before heading back to the guest house.

He was almost there when he saw the omega sitting off to the side. His omega. At first he didn't believe it, but as he approached, the air cleared, it was filled with nothing but Grigg.

Nigel's chest heaved, ragged breaths drawn from him as blood thudded in his veins. He felt an overwhelming need to protect and care and love. He was shaking by the time he stood next to the omega.

He told Grigg was beautiful and the omega looked up. He seemed surprised and disbelieving and Nigel knew how that felt, so much so that it drew a deep laugh from him, relief flooding through him as Grigg smiled groggily up at him.

“Nigel!” The omega seemed weak and tired, but his smile was bright and warm. “Is it really you?”

“Yes darling. I found you, I’m here.”

Chapter 2

Chapter Summary

Nigel and Grigg discuss their relationship and then have to deal with Grigg going into heat a few days early.

Chapter Notes

Massive apologies that this has taken so long. I've not been having a very good time of it lately and writing anything more than ficlets and drabbles has been pretty hard - so if you're reading any of my other WIPs, I'm really sorry I've left them hanging. I promise they will get completed.

I've deleted and rewritten this chapter so many times that my head is spinning but I'm just going to post it because the alternative was to give in to the part of me that just wanted to post "and then they fucked. The end" instead of an actual chapter. So, apologies if it's utterly terrible, but as this is a small ship maybe no one will care.

Nigel had no clue where Grigg lived and so found them a cab instead to take them to his lodgings. The exit from the club and the whole of the cab ride was spent regarding each other in silent wonder, as though speaking might break the spell and they'd discover they hadn't found each other after all. That this was just a dream. They held onto each other, not really embracing, but not just steadying - just to stay grounded.

When Nigel let go of Grigg to fish out his keys, Grigg grit his teeth and frowned, muttering something under his breath. When they got to the room Grigg dropped down onto the bed, frown still firmly in place, though now more of a scowl. Nigel looked at him, trying to figure out what was going on in that beautiful head. Was Grigg angry at him? He'd needed to let go so he could open the door.

"Darling, I had to open the door-" he began to explain but was cut off by sharp words and a finger jabbing in the air.

"This is all your fault! Yours! Do you think I wanted this?" The anger was palpable and tears were now threatening in Grigg's eyes.

"I… This?" Nigel gestured his finger between the two of them. "Us? Being bonded?" That stung a little. If anything, their experiences had shown it was likely a mutual mistake given how caught up they were in each other.

Grigg glared at him, biting his lower lip as tears began to silently fall. “I never wanted anyone to take care of me. I don’t need you... Only I do because of my stupid fucking body!” Grigg didn’t so much run out of steam but appeared to cut himself off so as not to lose it completely.

Nigel took a tentative step forward. “Darling I’m sorry. We can fix this, we can go see a doctor-”

“It’s too late for that!” Grigg snapped at him and pulled himself further up the bed and away from Nigel. “I already asked, it’s too late.” His voice became hushed as he spoke the dire reality.

Nigel couldn’t say he was sorry. He was sorry that it was so hard for Grigg, and sure maybe he’d watched too many stupid romcoms, but he wasn’t sorry about this. He wanted Grigg, whether because of the bond or because of something deeper. He’d wanted him when he scented him in the bar and took him back to the hotel, he’d wanted him when they woke up bonded and he stupidly ran away. He wanted him when Grigg had ran back to America.

“What do you want me to do?” Nigel asked gently. He lowered himself to sit on the end of the bed but body facing Grigg.

“I want you to help me, and I hate myself for it.” Grigg pulled his legs up and wrapped his arms around them, curling over to hide his face.

“Please, don’t. Darling… I… I am sorry this is happening.” Nigel really was sorry, even though he wasn’t fully sure exactly what was happening. He felt like he was in the middle of a breakup, which was both bizarre and impossible - much like the entire situation.

“I’ve been really sick Nigel.” Grigg’s voice was muffled but he made no move to raise his head. “I’m so stupid. I know how sick I am and I’ve been ignoring it because I wanted to ignore this situation, I wanted to ignore you. I didn’t want to be dependant.”

Nigel chanced moving further across the bed to Grigg, and the omega didn’t flinch when he ran a hand over his back, rubbing slow circles. If anything he leaned back into the touch though he seemed to fight that urge.

“Is that why you ran from me?” Nigel asked.

Grigg’s head shot up then and he looked at him with red rimmed eyes. “I didn’t run from you… Not...I didn’t mean to. It was too much. I just wanted to go back to my life. I didn’t even think I just left…” Some of this seemed to only be occurring to the omega as he spoke the words with a level of realisation.

“We have both messed up our fair share in this, but we need to talk and work it out. I am here now, I will always be wherever you need me to be.” Nigel continued rubbing gently but Grigg jerked away from his touch at these words.

“Don’t you get it? I don’t want you to be! I have money Nigel, I have a career, I’m successful. I’m not a cliche from some terrible movie. I don’t want or need an alpha and I

mean it, I'm not some omega in distress or uptight bitch who will meet the right alpha and realise his knot is the answer to all life's problems. That isn't real life, that isn't me." He ran out of steam there and let his shoulder slump. "But it is isn't it. I'm trapped now, if we're apart I get sick again. When I go into heat I need you to knot me." He sighed and stared into the distance. "This is like some terrible dream."

Nigel was quiet for a moment. Then he let out a deep breath and moved himself up the bed to recline against the pillows alongside Grigg but not touching. "Well, ok." He took another deep breath to replace the one he'd let go. "You see, I am not one of those movie alphas either, I am definitely not some dream catch that you want to take home to your family. But that doesn't mean I don't, I guess, believe in the message of some of those movies. That some people are meant to be together and so life puts them together." He let out a low chuckle thinking about the last couple of weeks. "I believe it so much that I stupidly came to America thinking I would just find you somehow with no effort - that we would find each other. But as you say this is real life and even so, I found you - by accident."

Grigg looked across at him with a small, wry smile. It was a ridiculous circumstance.

"What were you doing in that bar anyway?" Grigg was still smiling but clearly seemed cautious of the answer.

"Darling, I… I was curious. I never intended to do anything, I just felt low, I wanted to be flattered, I wanted to have omegas come onto me because that is maybe how I am." He gave a lopsided grin. "I am just so glad I went and found you. There could've been no better result for me."

Grigg nodded, smile faltering.

Nigel didn't ask what the omega was doing there. He had a good idea that Grigg would have needed to seek an alpha in his absence and he could never hold biology against the beautiful thing. He grabbed Grigg's hand and gave it a squeeze.

"I don't know how or why this happened, and maybe we will be miserable. But something tells me we won't. Because when I smell you I know you, like you are carried on the tiny molecules of scent into me. And when I'm inside you I feel like I'm home. And maybe I'm just some stupid romantic, but…" He let out a sigh and looked directly at Grigg. "I don't want to possess you, I don't want to be responsible for you or anyone else, I never did, no more than you wanted it. So maybe you can just be responsible for you and I can try not to fuck everything up and we can see how that goes?" He gave a gentle smile and was relieved to find it returned.

*

Grigg's eyes blinked open against sunlight streaming in through curtains that neither of them had thought to close. He realised he'd drooled a little and was still fully clothed where he fell asleep atop of the bed covers. Nigel slept next to him, snoring noisily, which Grigg found amusing before deciding it was something that would probably not stay amusing for very long.

They had talked most of the night, and at least an hour of that was about romcoms, which was something of an interest for his mate it would seem. Either way, he felt relaxed and more settled now that the sickness had eased in the alpha's company - a reprieve as he knew his heat would descend soon. He mentally kicked himself not for the first time since Nigel found him, cursing himself for being so stupid as to run away. That had clearly only made the situation worse. He still wasn't too happy about giving into his biology, but he could have found a worse match. Hell, he'd dated and hooked up with plenty. Alpha's who, no matter what they say, deep down want someone they can tame, someone who will eventually be submissive and meek for them. That wasn't in Grigg's nature, and he was happy to find it didn't seem to be in Nigel's to desire.

Grigg eased off the bed, trying not to wake Nigel, and popped into the ensuite. He cleaned his teeth with a finger and paste, washed up, and made himself look semi presentable though his clothes could do with a press.

He'd decided to invite Nigel for brunch at this great place he knew. They needed to start over, they needed to date and get to know each other and if it didn't work they'd deal with that then. They'd be no worse off than they were now. But Grigg weirdly had faith in Nigel's confidence that, just like some awful movie, they were meant to be together and although unconventional in its beginnings, it would al work out.

Grigg splashed some cool water on his face and felt a little relief. It was only in doing so that he realised his face had felt hot. He ignored the flush for a moment and went about finishing up in the bathroom and peeking his head around the door to see if Nigel was still asleep.

And then his face felt damp and he raised a hand to his brow and found sweat beading there. He was looking at his moistened fingers questioningly when he felt a sharp pain through his abdomen and then an ache, a deep ache in his loins. He gripped the door frame and was about to call Nigel's name when the alpha's eyes snapped open and narrowed on him immediately.

The desire in Nigel's eyes was almost a tangible thing as he scented the air with unwavering gaze. He felt it bore into and through him. It drew a whimper from him and all he could think was *yes, this is what it feels like to go into heat early.*

*

Nigel had never been woken like that before in his life. It was like his inner alpha, his hindbrain, had woken before the rest of him. Scented Grigg, his mate. Bonded mate. His cock had been instantly hard and he'd had an overwhelming need to take care of the omega, make sure he was safe, comfortable and thoroughly fucked. Those feelings all remained as he composed himself and moved quickly to Grigg's side.

He wasn't really surprised by this turn of events though maybe he should have been more prepared. Because the responsibility of getting Grigg through his heat in a strange country and not his own house with its kitchen and other amenities, was a little overwhelming. And he should have known better, he scolded himself. As soon as he'd seen Grigg in the club he could see how unwell the separation had made him, and he'd mentioned that his heat was due in days. Nigel should have gone out then and found an all night store for supplies - food and bottled water and anything else Grigg would need, that they would both need, just in case.

As Grigg started to pull off his already sweat damp clothes, Nigel felt like a bit of a shit alpha for not having prepared. There was nothing he could do about that, he needed to be a good alpha from here on in.

“It’s ok darling, I will take care of you.” He soothed, moving to help Grigg pull his t-shirt over his head. Grigg gave a slight smile and buried his face in Nigel’s neck and took several deep breaths that seemed to calm him. “You’re not doing this alone, gorgeous. I’ve got you.” He reassured as Grigg melted against him and then breathed out softly -

“Alpha.”

*

In the moments where Grigg could think of more than just been filled and knotted, he found he had a sort of eager anticipation to be filled and knotted. He’d always assumed that sharing a heat would be as routine and perfunctory as when he was alone. Usually it was just a few days of masturbating, fucking himself on his knotting dildo. It was all sort of run of the mill, enjoyable enough in terms of the gratification, but it was exhausting. He’d usually run out of food despite preparing meals for when he was more lucid, as he’d end up bingeing on these no matter how much he made each time. But it wasn’t terrible, it was just life.

He had assumed it would be pretty much the same, only with a person taking the place of his knotting toy. He thought, worst case scenario, would be that the other person was more concerned with their own pleasure and so it might not be much more fun for him than if he were alone. That was really what had put him off in the past to a greater degree. But now he was sort of glad he hadn’t ever shared his heat with anyone else. He was glad he had saved the experience for his mate, who was bizarrely still almost a complete stranger. More bizarre still was that it didn’t really feel like that mattered.

He’d breathed out the word - “Alpha” as a feeling, a craving, overwhelmed him, stronger than any other time he’d been in heat. But then the heat was coming on faster too, making everything feel slightly overwhelming and fuzzy. Nigel must have realised because he took hold of him, hushed him, moved him to the ensuite, gently undressed him the rest of the way and then sat him in the bath. Nigel filled luke warm water around him before sitting in opposite and running a wet cloth over his now feverish skin. It might have been minutes or hours, Grigg wasn’t sure but the water was cold when he finally started to feel a little more comfortable. Between his heat and the soothing effects of the water on his skin, Grigg happily drifted in and out for a while, trusting that Nigel was taking care of him.

“Darling, I’ve got you.” He realised Nigel was muttering over and over, sometimes he spoke Romanian but with the same affectation that made him believe it was the same set of words. A mantra that calmed him, not just for it’s rhythm, but because he felt it. He could feel that Nigel really did have him, was there for him, would never not be there for him. And he wanted that. Maybe it was because of the heat and the bond, but he wanted Nigel in every way. He was suddenly happy to stop fighting it. Like a weight lifted.

“I’m ok… I was… I’m ok.” his voice was a little hoarse.

“I was worried for a moment. You went into heat so fast, your skin is burning.” His voice was laced with a concern that Grigg found touching, warming. “I was worried, with everything your body has been through. But I will take care of you. I’ve got you.” Nigel moved around, the water sloshing, until he stood in the bath and pulled Grigg up into his arms. Grigg couldn’t help but smile. This was like no heat he’d ever experienced before - symptomatically more intense, but at the same time he didn’t feel as desperate. There was the intense desire to breed that all omegas felt during heat, but now that he had an alpha with him, it felt calming, relaxed. There was no real hurry - they had days.

Grigg felt as if he were floating as he was wrapped in a fluffy towel, carried back to the bedroom and gently laid on the bed. Then Nigel was gone for a moment and he could hear a call being made - to the reception asking for room service, Grigg wasn’t sure of the rest of it. He found himself drifting off into a dreamless sleep.

*

Nigel opened the door quietly when room service arrived. The look on the woman’s face was grim and he’d already had to explain the circumstances - in brief - over the phone when the woman had told him this wasn’t ‘that kind of establishment.’

He surprised himself at not becoming rude towards her, his temper quelled by the knowledge that Grigg needed him, and by extension needed this woman’s cooperation. He thanked her and took the bag of cold food and bottled water.

He closed the door quietly and set the haphazard meal on the room’s little table before turning to Grigg. The omega slept peacefully as though his body were conserving energy. Nigel had been pretty much rock hard since he first scented the heat had come on, but he didn’t feel the need to rush. He felt calm, relaxed. He was looking forward to a leisurely coupling - many leisurely couplings.

He took the opportunity to really study his omega - the towel now over him as a blanket, soaking the sweat that beaded all over golden skin. The colour of it reminding him of the pale skin hidden by the towel, the tan lines he’d remembered and imagined over and over since their separation. He laid his hand on Grigg’s shoulder.

“Darling, you should eat something.” He spoke gently and Grigg’s eyes fluttered open. Eyes that took a moment to focus on him and then dilate.

“Nigel…” His name was purred out on a smile as Grigg stretched - the towel falling away a little and revealing the skin that Nigel remembered.

“Food gorgeous, ok?”

Grigg shook his head as he pulled himself up, pulling Nigel down until the alpha was sitting and he was in his lap.

“I’m not hungry… I need…” Grigg breathed in the scent at Nigel’s neck and the alpha’s cock strained.

“What do you need darling?” Nigel asked. He already knew, but there was something not just hot, but gratifying, to hear what an omega - his omega - needed from him.

“Your knot, please Nigel… I need you to…” Grigg blushed. Even with the blur of heat on him the omega blushed and Nigel felt himself fall even further for him. This strange creature - smart, independent, demanding, and sometimes coy.

Nigel smiled and gently pushed Grigg back to the bed. “I need that too,” he replied. Realising that he did. After the unusual circumstances of their bonding and their separation he needed this every bit as much as Grigg on some level.

He tugged the towel that had wrapped itself around part of Grigg’s lower half, pulling it free and tossing it behind him as he and the omega grinned at each other. He placed a hand on the warm and damp tanned skin of Grigg’s thigh and ran it upwards as the omega sighed into the touch. Grigg turned into his hand - moving so that he repositioned himself on his front as Nigel’s hand travelled on.

“Oh god, you’re even more beautiful than I remember.” Nigel was truly taken aback as he marvelled at the soft skin under his fingers. He moved his palm over the omega’s smooth rump - up to his lower back and higher where he pushed down. Grigg went willingly, letting out a shallow rumble, a purr, as he pressed himself to the pillow and raised his ass to his alpha.

Nigel’s breath caught at the sight and his heart was thumping so hard in his chest he wasn’t sure how to draw a breath. Finally managing a shaky intake of air, he spread Grigg’s cheeks with his hands before lowering his mouth to him and groaned as Grigg whimpered at the touch.

When he had tasted Grigg briefly before it had been ecstasy - this was heaven. Slick was gathered thickly at Grigg’s entrance, more leaking out as Nigel pushed his tongue inside for a better taste. The omega moaned at that and Nigel continued with a smile. He knew Grigg needed his knot, and would need it multiple times in the next few days, but he had to taste the man, had to know him after everything. He fucked Grigg slowly with his tongue, enjoying the omega writhing beneath him.

“Nigel… alpha…” gentle words expelled on panted breaths “I’m gonna…”

Nigel moaned, feeling the omega shudder under the vibrations it caused. He moved his hand to Grigg’s cock and gave a stroke, then another and the omega came hard with a cry and went completely pliant beneath him, collapsing to the bed.

Nigel went to move off the bed to get something to clean them up but Grigg’s hand shot out and stopped him. “Please… Still need…”

Nigel’s heart hadn’d stopped thumping and now it was threatening to break ribs. He would remember this, he knew, the first time he would knot his omega in heat. The first time that they would join together in a way that biology drove them to, but love sealed.

Love. That seemed such an odd thought, but he knew he loved Grigg. That it wasn't just his biology, but everything he knew of the omega so far he loved and was in love with and was falling deeper with every moment they spent together.

Maybe he did watch too many damn stupid movies.

*

Grigg felt a need, a physical pull within him that he'd never felt before, even during heats. He needed Nigel, wanted him, on some level even loved him. Yes already, which was ridiculous and Grigg was not going to admit it to himself, let alone out loud, because it was probably just the hormones making him think this was more than infatuation. He'd clearly already been infected by Nigel's unwavering romantic streak.

He ached when Nigel moved off the bed to shed his clothes, because there was a desperate need for the alpha to be close, regardless of anything and everything else.

He was whimpering by the time Nigel moved back behind him. His mind practically numb and his body on fire as he raised his hips back up and the alpha pushed inside him. They'd had sex before, but this was something else. He'd never felt this connected to anyone before and it made it hard to breath.

Despite having just cum, the need to be knotted had not abated. If anything the release had unwound him, taken the edge off and given him a sharp and clear focus on his goal. He pushed back on Nigel's thrust and took the alpha so suddenly deep that Nigel let out a long moan and stilled.

"More of that gorgeous and this might be over a bit too soon." Nigel chuckled and leaned forward, Grigg savouring the sensation of his lips along his shoulders. Nigel stayed draped over him, the weight felt so good. He had never realised he had been missing it in his previous heats. From the angle he was at, Nigel only made small but deep thrusts, already buried so deep in him that he could feel the alpha's knot pressing against him. It sent a shudder through him and he pushed back again, involuntarily.

Nigel's hands went to his hips to steady him and the alpha chuckled again but continued the slow and easy pace. It felt like love making, as Nigel nuzzled at his neck - his scent gland and the bonding bite mark that was starting to scar. It wasn't the hard and fast fucking - the desperate rutting - that Grigg thought it would be. Instead it felt like their bodies were melting together, they were a physical manifestation of the bond between them.

Nigel pressed him to the bed and he went willingly, stretching out so that his cock, now stirring again, caught a little friction from the mattress beneath as Nigel rocked into him. The feeling was amazing, the best sex he'd ever had. Nigel licked and kissed and nipped and nuzzled wherever he could reach with his mouth and Grigg knew that he would never get tired of the way the alpha worshipped his body. Nigel's hands, no longer required on Grigg's hips, moved up to clasp his hands. Every possible point of contact was made and though Grigg had the usual heat induced sense of need, it felt like it was already being fulfilled bit by bit, with each slow and blissful thrust. When Nigel's knot was finally pressing into him and sealing them together it felt merely like the completion of something already begun rather

than the only thing he needed. He knew immediately it was because the bond was driving him to something more - his need wasn't for the knot alone, it was for the alpha himself - it was for Nigel. His Nigel.

He came again with the alpha's name on his lips. When Nigel followed him over the edge he felt tears of pleasure and joy on the back of his neck and he felt a warmth spread through his entire body as his alpha's seed filled him.

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After three days of bliss Nigel wondered if the glow of their mating would fade with Grigg's heat, but when the omega stirred next to him - his skin cooler and his eyes blue rather than mostly pupil - Nigel was glad to find it hadn't.

Grigg was settled in the crook of his arm and pulled back slightly to look up at him and beam a smile. He'd seen that smile a lot in the last three days, a goofy blissed out version, but still the same really. It warmed him.

"How are you feeling gorgeous?" He asked as Grigg first stretched out against him and then nuzzled into his chest.

"Very very satisfied, but tired." Grigg laughed lightly and Nigel joined him. Nigel had lost count of the amount of times he knotted the omega, only that it was about half as many times as the number of times he made Grigg cum. Because Nigel just couldn't turn down the opportunity to explore the omega for days on end.

Grigg seemed happy. He certainly seemed healthier - the colour had returned to his face and despite the fact that they had barely touched the food that was regularly dropped in by an unamused proprietor, Grigg didn't seem as drawn. Nigel knew it was a physical thing - biology, hormones - that the bond needed them together. But he couldn't help but hope that Grigg felt it on another level too, as he did. That he felt it in more than just his instinctive hindbrain.

"Do you think… I mean, I wonder about what happened. We were both drunk, and we know from the great sex how compatible we are. Do you think that we were so drunk we just went for it? Felt that connection and-" He stopped himself short. He knew he was speaking for himself but hoped that those feelings were true of Grigg too.

The omega raised his head from Nigel's chest and looked at him with a curious expression. "I've thought about it a lot actually. I've never… I don't think I'd ever do something as stupid as to bond with someone by accident even when drunk. And I feel… there is this connection I have to you that doesn't feel like it's the bond and maybe that's why we did it? But, I'm just not sure how to feel about any of this really." He paused and Nigel could sense the hesitation there and wondered if he was stopping himself saying something that might hurt Nigel.

Grigg sighed. "I think I just really want to go home, be in my own place and try to work it all out."

Nigel felt a pang in his chest and a tight grip in his throat. “That’s ok, I understand.” He forced the words out. “I mean, there are ways around this even if it is medically too late. You can go on and live your life and I can just be available when you’re in heat and-”

“What are you talking about?” Grigg looked baffled and Nigel knew he was doing a shit job of hiding the pain from his expression. Maybe Grigg would rather suffer through them without his bonded alpha? What did that say about him as an alpha? His throat tightened a little more and made it difficult to breath.

“Nigel, you’re coming home with me.” the omega said with certainty, and then added a little more cautiously - “aren’t you? I mean, to work it all out together?”

Nigel felt his chest expand and he pulled Grigg up to him, kissing him deeply and only pulling back when neither could breath.

“You couldn’t keep me away gorgeous! If you want me there?”

“Of course. I mean… This is it now right? We need to work it out before we do something even more ridiculously disastrous than accidentally bonding and then running away.” Grigg’s tone was light and it warmed Nigel that he was approaching it with levity. Nigel joined the joke -

“Well, I don’t think there is much worse we could do right now. No more disasters for now!” an amusing thought jumped into his head - “knowing our luck you are probably going to find you’re pregnant.”

They laughed for a moment, the laugh dwindling awkwardly into silence. Grigg’s expression moved from amused through to realisation and then trepidation. He dropped his head back to Nigel’s chest. And though the words were muffled against his skin Nigel heard the omega say - “Oh fuck.”

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